

Approved

Rockville Environment Commission Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, March 2, 2017

Diamondback Terrapin, City Hall,
111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland

Attendance

Commissioners Present: Chair John Becker, Steve Cardon, Alicia Hosmer (via phone), Larissa Johnson (8:30 p.m.), Clark Reed, Lea Rosenbohm, Steve Sprague, and Fedon Vayanis.

Commissioners Absent:

Council Liaison: Mark Pierzchala (absent)

City Staff: Erica Shingara

Guests: Timmy Chong (MD Journalism student), Stephanie Riddick, Jennifer Seiler

Meeting Commencement and Introductions

The meeting convened at 7:01 pm by Chair Becker.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Sprague moved and Commissioner Reed seconded a motion to approve the March 2, 2017 agenda. The motion passed (7-0). Commissioner Johnson was absent for the vote.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Sprague moved and Commissioner Hosmer seconded a motion to approve the February 2, 2017 minutes. The motion passed (6-0-1). Commissioner Rosenbohm abstained due to absence.

Updates

- Chair Becker reported that he testified on behalf of the City on February 15th in support of a bill proposing a statewide prohibition on polystyrene food service products and loose fill packaging (House Bill 229). Delegate Lierman, TrashFree Maryland, and a representative from Prince George's County introduced HB 229 to the Committee and testified in support.
- Staff reported that the City also submitted written testimony in support of the Statewide fracking ban (SB 740). The City is also supporting Senate Bill 472 Municipal Stormwater Charges (property subject to charges) that requires a unit of State government, a county, a college or university, or a local school system to be subject to the charges of municipality's stormwater utility fee.
- The Commission reviewed the 2017 calendar and planned for upcoming events:
 - **Action Item:** Chair Becker and Commissioners Cardon, Hosmer and Sprague volunteered to accept the Earth Hour/Day/Month Proclamation on March 13. Staff will forward talking points.
 - **Action Item:** Commissioners are requested to send photos of backyard habitats to staff and attend the March 23rd Community Wildlife Habitat celebration at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

Environmental Excellence Awards Nominations

- Commissioner Sprague moved and Commissioner Cardon seconded a motion to recommend Dawson's Market for an Environmental Excellence Award for Outstanding Leadership in Environmental Practices. The motion passed (7-0). Commissioner Cardon suggested contacting the store's Assistant Manager for Sustainability to talk about sustainability at a future meeting.
 - **Action item:** Commissioner Rosenbohm to share contact information with staff.
- Commissioner Reed moved and Commissioner Rosenbohm seconded motion to recommend Rockville's Community Services Youth Program for an Environmental Excellence Award for Outstanding Environmental Education and Academic Achievement. The program organized several student environmental service and educational projects. The motion passed (6-1).
- Commissioner Vayanis moved and Commissioner Rosenbohm seconded motion to recommend the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville for an Environmental Excellence Award for Outstanding Achievement in Green Building Technology and Design. The Commission discussed the nomination, which included the installation of a 32 kW solar photovoltaic system in 2015, certification as a Green Sanctuary, and outreach for the solar co-op. The motion passed (5-0-2).
 - **Action Item:** Chair Becker will request additional details about elements of the green sanctuary certification.
- Chair Becker reported that Councilmember Pierzchala contacted Montgomery College for a nomination for the new science building. An updated nomination is still pending.

Events and Hometown Holidays (HTH) Planning

- The Commission reviewed the remaining spring events.
- Commissioner Rosenbohm reported that she received the HTH registration form. The Commission inquired if it is possible to only participate on Saturday and whether they could share a portion of the City information booth so there would not be an empty booth on Sunday.
- Volunteers would be requested to volunteer at the booth from 1:30 (setup) to 8 p.m. (cleanup) on May 27.
 - **Action Item:** Staff will inquire about the feasibility of coordinating with the City booth on Saturday.
 - **Action Item:** Chair Becker and Commissioner Rosenbohm volunteered to arrange registration for the booth and volunteers between 1:30 to 8. Volunteer schedule to be arranged at the April meeting.

Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Stakeholder Process

- The committees started to review the summary table of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (COG) draft regional action plan and identified sections to evaluate.
- Commissioner Sprague noted that several waste management actions from COG's larger master list of 300 actions were not in the draft plan and that the City is already doing many of the actions. He will include those additional actions in the summary table.
- The Commission reviewed the sections of the CAP and assigned the following committee review responsibilities:
 - **Action Items for Energy Committee:** Sections 1 (Reduce energy consumption), Section 2 (Increase renewables), a portion of Section 3 (Advance Sustainable Regional Mobility) and a portion of Section 4 (Increase Sustainable Urban Development)

- **Action Items for Watershed Committee:** portions of Section 4 (Increase Sustainable Urban Development)
- **Action Items for Composting and Recycling Committee:** Section 5 (Move toward zero waste)
- **Action Items for All Committees:** Sections 6 (Build regional resilience), Section 7 (Grow the regional clean economy) and Section 8 (Protect equity and health).
- **Action Items for All Committees:** Committees to continue to review their sections and enter in recommendations in the shared table in Google docs for a status check-in at the April meeting.
- The Commission also discussed potential stakeholder outreach and engagement opportunities. Commissioner Cardon suggested potential CAP outreach opportunities at the HHT booth. The Commission also discussed potential online surveys, community meetings, and discussions with other boards and commissions. Guidance from the Mayor and Council will help inform the stakeholder engagement process.

Committee Reports:

- ***Composting and Recycling Committees:*** Commissioner Rosenbohm noted that the committee reviewed the relevant section of the draft CAP table and identified additional actions to include. They also submitted updates to Chair Becker to include in the annual report. Commissioners Rosenbohm and Sprague invited new volunteers to participate in the committee.
- ***Energy Committee:*** Commissioner Reed reported the committee reviewed the draft CAP table and identified the sections most relevant for committee review. Stephanie Riddick reported that they are drafting a letter to local businesses for environmental coordination opportunities. REDI offered the Commission a table at the September Rockville Resource Meetup as an opportunity to network with local businesses. Commissioner Reed noted that he conducted an aerial evaluation of commercial rooftops for potentially feasible community solar sites. He also noted that the Montgomery County Solar Co-op Celebration was held on February 23 at Rockville City Hall. More than 30 people attended, including City and County elected officials. Of the 88 solar installs, approximately 22 were in Rockville. MD SUN also presented the Commission with solar support award.
- ***Sustainability:*** Commissioner Hosmer reported on plans for the Community Wildlife Habitat celebration on March 23 at 6:30 pm at City Hall. The City mailed invitations to certified habitat property owners and NWF will email invitations on the 13th. Staff noted that event setup is at 6 p.m. in the Mayor and Council Chambers and that all are encouraged to attend.
 - **Action Item:** Commissioners to email staff photos of their backyard habitats.
 - **Action Item:** Commissioner Reed offered to donate local honey as an illustration of the importance of backyard habitat.
- ***Watershed:*** Commissioners Cardon and Vayanis reported that the committee reviewed the draft NPDES MS4 permit and submitted 14 questions/comments to staff. Commissioner Cardon also reported the committee is planning the stream cleanup for April 8th at Maryvale Park from 10:30 to noon and that all Commissioners are encouraged to attend. He noted that volunteers have grown at the event and that student service learning (SSL) hours are offered.

Montgomery County Energy Challenge

Commissioner Johnson reported that Montgomery County is organizing an Energy Conservation Challenge between the Environment Commissions of Montgomery County, Rockville, Gaithersburg, Takoma Park and Poolesville. Sample energy actions and criteria were distributed and

reviewed. The competition involves all Commissioners and committee volunteers. The competition starts now and will end on April 24. The winning team will be announced at Montgomery County Greenfest.

- **Action Item:** Commissioner Johnson will send out an electronic version of the competition guidelines.
- **Action Item:** Commissioners and committee volunteers to complete their energy competition actions and send documentation to Erica Shingara by April 22 so that she can compile the information for the April 24th deadline.

Environment Management Division Update

- Staff reported that Long Range Planning may attend the April meeting to discuss upcoming steps with the Comprehensive Master Plan update.

New Business

- Commissioner Johnson inquired about standards for energy efficient light switches and messaging for all City meeting rooms. She noted that different facilities have different light switches and information.

Executive Session

The Commission adjourned to executive session to discuss 2 vacant positions and the upcoming term expiration for the Chair. The Commission voted to recommend Chair Becker to serve a second term as chair and to recommend the Mayor and Council reappoint Commissioner Sprague to serve another term. Next month the Commission will invite any new applicants to the meeting and discuss recommendations to fill Commissioner Triolo's vacancy.

Adjourn

The Commission adjourned by acclamation at 9:27 p.m.

Next Commission Meeting

The Commission will tentatively meet on **Thursday, April 6, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Diamondback Terrapin Conference Room at the Rockville City Hall**, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville Maryland 20850-2321. The public is invited to attend.